

Top Secret



National Intelligence Bulletin

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June 24, 1974

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USSR-US

The Soviet press on the eve of the summit is stressing the strength of US support for detente.

Izvestia chief editor L. N. Tolkunov, who recently wrote a favorable commentary on the visit to the US last month by a Supreme Soviet delegation, has composed an optimistic piece focusing on the prospects for progress in arms limitation. Noting the increase in economic cooperation, he called for concomitant movement in the "delicate area" of military detente, which he said would provide an opportunity for further steps.

Tolkunov, who was one of the delegates making the trip, said President Nixon had concluded that most Americans support the US-Soviet dialogue and desire early limitation of strategic arms and peaceful resolution of all bilateral problems. Vice President Ford was quoted as being optimistic that the President and Brezhnev can continue cooperation, despite problems.

Picking up a theme found in other recent Soviet commentaries, Tolkunov stressed the bipartisan character of US support for further Soviet-American detente. Senators Mansfield and Scott were said to have assured their Soviet guests that the presidential candidates in 1976 will "without doubt" continue the policy of detente. Senator Mansfield was quoted as saying, in addition, that both nations can cooperate in limiting arms and that the American people support such limitation.

Tolkunov claimed to have found considerable congressional opposition to the activities and plans of the "Pentagon and its chief, Schlesinger," especially to their new targeting doctrine and the size of the US defense budget--favorite targets of Soviet criticism.

This article by Tolkunov, like the preceding one, offers a relatively detailed and sophisticated view of the diversity of American political opinion. Its primary

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objective is to show that the policy of detente has strong support in the US and that its critics are a "motley coalition" opposing better relations.

In repeatedly offering such assurances, the Soviets reveal continued concern about the effect that political developments in the US might have on detente. Their sensitivity to US developments affecting the future of arms limitation in particular was demonstrated anew on Sunday when Tass quickly reported official US denial of allegations that the SALT accords of 1972 involved secret agreements. [REDACTED]

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AUSTRIA

Foreign Minister Rudolf Kirchschlaeger survived a closing surge by opposition People's Party candidate Alois Lugger to win the Austrian presidency for a six-year term. His narrow victory was a relief to the governing Socialists, who had feared they might lose the presidential post for the first time since the war.

The closeness of the vote--less than a 4-percent difference--was partly the result of a tactical error by Kirchschlaeger. The career diplomat, who has no formal ties to any party, failed to inform Chancellor Kreisky that he had been a member of a rightist organization during the Nazi period and of the People's Party briefly after the war. Subsequent disclosures embittered many Socialists, who felt Kreisky made a mistake in hand-picking a man with Kirchschlaeger's conservative and Catholic background.

Lugger's showing has given his party a large psychological boost. The charismatic mayor of Innsbruck campaigned effectively, focusing on the government's inability to control inflation. In view of the opposition's strong showing, Kreisky has indicated he probably will not call parliamentary elections before his term ends in October 1975.

Peter Jankowitsch, Austria's representative to the UN, will replace Kirchschlaeger as foreign minister.

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AUSTRALIA

The completion over the weekend of vote-counting for the national election five weeks ago ended the most drawn-out election process in Australian history.

Final Senate results have the Labor government tied with the Liberal-Country opposition. Two independents, former Liberals who are expected to vote with the opposition, hold the balance of power. Final results for the lower house, which were completed earlier, gave Labor a five-seat majority there.

Although the Whitlam government failed to capture the Senate and had its House majority reduced somewhat, a constitutional provision offers some hope that legislation blocked by the previous Senate will still be enacted. Prime Minister Whitlam can call a joint sitting of both houses--in which Labor would have a majority of three--to consider this legislation. He cannot use this tactic, however, to promote new bills.

Labor's tight position in Parliament may in time lead to the same kind of roadblocks that prompted Whitlam to call the elections last month.

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SOUTH VIETNAM

Hanoi and the Viet Cong have again suspended the military talks in Saigon on implementing the cease-fire and searching for missing servicemen.

As one of the main reasons for the suspension, Communist spokesmen cited the South Vietnamese government's refusal to sign a formal statement guaranteeing Communist delegates diplomatic privileges and immunities. They also cited as contributing factors the recent sinking of a North Vietnamese cargo vessel off the coast of Quang Tri Province, stepped-up "land-grabbing" operations by Saigon, and a statement by the US embassy in Saigon assailing Hanoi's continuing violations of the Paris accords.

Although no date has been set for resuming the talks, the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese delegations have carefully avoided suggesting that they have any intention of scuttling them completely or of pulling out of Saigon. The Communists probably believe that President Thieu took the initiative to resume the Saigon talks earlier this month partly with an eye to the US congressional deliberations on foreign aid, and they certainly do not want to facilitate Thieu's efforts in this direction.

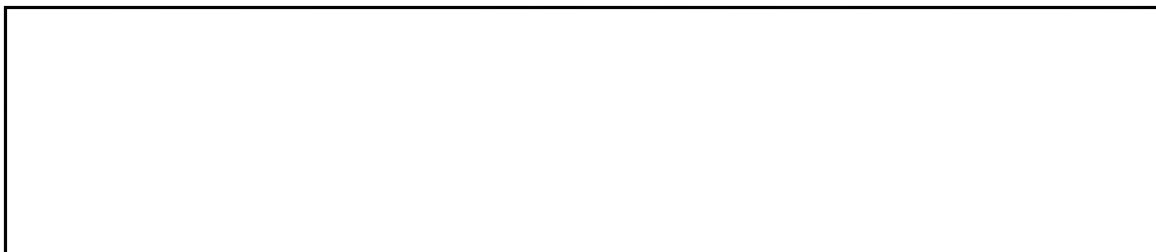
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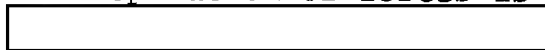
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FOR THE RECORD



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Israel-Syria: Israel withdrew on schedule yesterday from the remainder of the Syrian salient captured in the war last October. Israeli troops turned over the final three-mile-wide strip of land to troops of the UN disengagement observation force. The separation of forces is to be completed by June 26.



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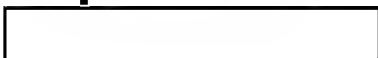
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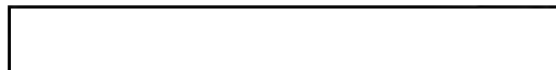
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